

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 13506

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, JA

SUBJECT: JAPANESE DESIRE FOR EXCHANGE OF ENERGY INFO WITH US

REF: TOKYO 12070

SUMMARY: JAPANESE BUSINESS LEADERS IN ENERGY FIELD MOVING TOWARD FORMATION OF SPECIAL ENERGY COMMITTEE, WHICH DESIGNED IN PART TO PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE OF ENERGY INFORMATION. CHAIRMAN OF KEIDANREN ENERGY COMMITTEE FEELS SOME PROGRESS BEING MADE TOWARD FORMING COUNTERPART GROUPS IN EC COUNTRIES, AND EMPHASIZED DESIRABILITY THAT SUCH PRIVATE GROUP BE FORMED IN US. THIS SUBJECT LIKELY TO BE RAISED WITH GOVERNOR LOVE DURING HIS VISIT TO JAPAN. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING COURSE OF WIDE-RANGING DISCUSSION WITH ECONCOMCOM/MIN ON ENERGY ISSUES, SOICHI MATSUNE, CHAIRMAN OF THE KEIDANREN (FEDERATION OF ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS)

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ENERGY COMMITTEE, EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE FOR IMPROVED INFORMATION EXCHANGE ON ENERGY BETWEEN PRIVATE INTERESTS IN

JAPAN AND THE US. MATSUNE NOTED THAT HE AND OTHER JAPANESE BUSINESS LEADERS MOVING TO FORM A SPECIAL ENERGY COMMITTEE (SEE SEPTEL). IN ADDITION TO COORDINATING JAPAN'S OWN POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES IN ENERGY AREA, ONE OF PRIMARY PURPOSES OF THIS COMMITTEE WOULD BE TO PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION EXCHANGE WITH A VIEW TOWARD DEVELOPING INTERNATIONAL JOINT VENTURES IN ENERGY FIELD.

2. MATSUNE NOTED THAT ONE OF REASONS FOR HIS RECENT CONSULTATIONS IN EUROPE WITH LEADERS OF BP, CFP, DEMINEX AND OTHERS (SEE REFTEL) WAS TO ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF COMMITTEES IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ALONG LINES SIMILAR TO THOSE OF NEW JAPANESE COMMITTEE, TO PROVIDE PARTNERS IN INFORMATION EXCHANGE. MATSUNE BELIEVED THAT HE HAD HAD SOME SUCCESS IN THIS AREA. HE WAS NOT AS SATISIFIED WITH PROGRESS IN US IN FORMING COUNTER-PART GROUP, HOWEVER. MATSUNE NOTED POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES POSED BY US ANTI-TRUST LAWS. ALSO NOTED THAT HE HAD AGREED WITH DAVID ROCKEFELLER THAT EXISTING JAPAN-US BUSINESSMAN'S COUNCIL WAS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR THIS TYPE OF EXCHANGE, SINCE IT TOO LARGE AND NOT FOCUSED ON ENERGY. MATSUNE HOWEVER STRESSED THE CLEAR NEED FOR SUCH A GROUP IN US IF COORDINATION IS TO BE EFFECTIVE.

3. ASKED FOR COMMENT, ECONCOM/MIN NOTED THAT MITI MIN NAKASONE AND MITI ENERGY ADVISOR MOROZUMI HAD SUGGESTED IDEA OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE LAST MARCH, CALLING FOR JOINT BUSINESS-GOVERNMENT GROUP ON BOTH SIDES. WE HAD REPLIED THAT IT DIFFICULT FOR USG TO PARTICIPATE TOGETHER WITH PRIVATE OIL COMPANIES, BUT THAT WE WILLING TO GO AHEAD INFORMALLY ON A GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT BASIS. SINCE THAT TIME THERE HAD BEEN SEVERAL AD HOC MEETINGS BETWEEN SENIOR USG OFFICIALS AND JAPANESE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LEADERS. FURTHER PROGRESS IN DEVELOPING THIS GOVT-TO-GOV'T FORMAT WAS VERY POSSIBLE. ECONCOM/MIN ALSO NOTED OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT GOJ MAY HAVE APPROACHED EXXON FOR INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS. THUS, LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION HAS CERTAINLY IMPROVED, AND MAY BE REACHING LEVEL DESIRED BY BOTH SIDES.

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4. DESPITE ECONCOM/MIN'S EXPLANATIONS, MATSUNE CLEARLY NOT CONVINCED THAT GOVT-TO-GOV'T CONSULTATIONS WILL SATISFY NEEDS OF JAPANESE PRIVATE SECTOR. IN VIEW OF THIS, EMBASSY BELIEVES IT VERY LIKELY THAT MATSUNE WILL URGE GOVERNOR LOVE DURING LATTER'S UPCOMING VISIT TO JAPAN, TO PROMOTE FORMATION OF SOME SORT OF COMMITTEE MADE UP OF US BUSINESS LEADERS IN ENERGY FIELD.

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